

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-24 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add the following new claims.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-24 (canceled)

25. (new) A method operating a distributed processing system having a network coupling a multiplicity of Host distributed devices for processing workloads for the distributed processing system, a plurality of Client systems requesting processing of the workloads, and a Server system for selectively distributing the workloads from the plurality of Client systems for processing by the distributed processing system comprising the steps of:

receiving in the Server system a request to store first back-up data from a first Client system, the first back-up data having associated storage priority data;

searching a database identifying excess storage capacity coupled to one or more of the multiplicity of Host distributed devices in response to the associated storage priority data and selecting candidate Host distributed devices for storing the first back-up data;

sending the first back-up data to one or more of the candidate Host distributed devices with retention data indicating conditions for retaining or deleting the first back-up data; and

updating an index in the Server system with address data for accessing the one or more candidate Host distributed devices receiving the first back-up data.

26. (new) The method of claim 25 further comprising the step of:

updating the storage priority data of the first back-up data stored at the one or more candidate Host distributed devices.

27. (new) The method of claim 25 further comprising the steps of:
- receiving the first back-up data from the first Client system;
  - partitioning the first back-up data into N partitions in response to the storage priority data corresponding to the first back-up data;
  - identifying M candidate Host distributed devices from the multiplicity of Host distributed devices for storing the N partitions; and
  - sending the N partitions to N storage locations within the M candidate Host distributed devices.
28. (new) The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of updating an index in the Server system identifying the N storage locations for recovering the N partitions of the first back-up data.
29. (new) The method of claim 25, wherein the storage priority data determines a retention time for the first back-up data, a speed required for recovering the first back-up data, and a level of redundancy needed for the first back-up data.
30. (new) The method of claim 29, wherein the retention time, recovery speed and redundancy level are used to determine a number P of storage locations required for storing the first back-up data and to determine which particular ones of the Host distributed devices are chosen as the P storage locations to store the first back-up data.
31. (new) The method of claim 25, wherein one of the multiplicity of Host distributed devices requests a back-up of data as a Client system.
32. (new) The method of claim 25, wherein an incentive for a first Host distributed device coupled to the network to process workloads for the distributed processing system comprises an authorization for the first Host distributed device to back-up data on the distributed processing system with corresponding first storage priority data.
33. (new) A software agent operating in the Client systems or in one or more of the multiplicity of Host distributed devices coupled to a network, the network configured

to enable a Server system to selectively couple the multiplicity of Host distributed devices to perform workloads for a distributed processing system, the software agent comprising a program of instructions for performing the program steps of:

receiving a command from a user to save data as first back-up data;

prompting the user to select options for storing the first back-up data thus generating storage priority data for the first back-up data;

sending a back-up data request to the Server system with the storage priority data for the first back-up data; and

sending the first back-up data to the Server system for storage on storage devices within the distributed data processing system in response to an acceptance of the back-up data request for the first back-up data by the Server system.

A 34. (new) A computer program product operating within a Server system coupled to a network and managing a distributed processing system, the network configured to enable the Server system to selectively couple a number M of Host distributed devices to perform workloads for the distributed processing system, the program product comprising a program of instructions for performing the program steps of:

providing an incentive to a Host distributed device to couple to the network to perform workloads for the distributed processing system, wherein the incentive comprises an authorization to back-up data using the distributed processing system;

sending a software agent to a first Host distributed device accepting the incentive;

receiving a request to back-up data as first back-up data from the first Host distributed device with corresponding storage priority data;

searching a database identifying excess storage capacity coupled to one or more of the M Host distributed devices in response to the associated storage priority data and selecting candidate Host distributed devices for storing the first back-up data;

sending the first back-up data to one or more of the candidate Host distributed devices with retention data indicating conditions for retaining or deleting the first back-up data; and

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updating an index in the Server system with address data for accessing the one or more candidate Host distributed devices receiving the first back-up data.

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